



California Regional Water Quality Control Board

Los Angeles Region



Recipient of the 2001 *Environmental Leadership Award* from Keep California Beautiful

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May 5, 2006

To: Office of Planning and Research
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Sacramento, CA 95814

County Clerk
County of Los Angeles
12400 Imperial Highway
Norwalk, California 90650

Notice of Exemption

From: California Regional Water Quality Control Board Los Angeles Region
320 W. Fourth Street, Suite 200
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Activity Title: Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL Implementation Plan Re-opener

Activity Location – Specific: Santa Clarita Valley

Activity Location – City: Santa Clarita and Saugus **Location** – **County:** Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Activity:

On July 10, 2003 the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region adopted a Basin Plan Amendment to incorporate a TMDL and Implementation Plan to address impairments of beneficial uses of the Santa Clara River due to excessive chloride loadings. The Implementation Plan requires the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County to implement studies, plans and actions to reduce chloride loadings to the Upper Santa Clara River and attain the chloride standards. The Los Angeles Water Board prepared substitute CEQA documents for the TMDL and Implementation Plan, pursuant to Title 23 California Code of Regulation, sections 3775 et seq., and Public Resources Code section 21159. Those documents were filed with the Resources Agency on August 21, 2002. Specific projects to reduce chloride loadings will be determined based on results of TMDL Special Studies. The environmental impacts of the

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implementation projects will be subject to project-level CEQA analysis pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21159.2.

The proposed action revises the implementation schedule of the existing TMDL. This activity will not impose additional environmental impacts from the TMDL regulation currently in place. The purpose of this action is to revise the implementation schedule to achieve basin plan objectives in a more timely manner than under the current TMDL. The only effect of this activity will be to potentially revise the schedule for the implementation actions previously analyzed. This action has no additional environmental impacts than those considered for this project previously. The reasonably foreseeable means of compliance with this regulation include implementing a ban on the installation and use of self regenerating water softeners, construction of advanced treatment processes to reduce chloride levels in effluent from water reclamation plants that discharge to the Upper Santa Clara River and discharge the brine into the Ocean, and discharge the water reclamation plant effluent directly to an ocean outfall. The increased pace of implementation of these means of compliance would not result in additional impacts because the environmental impacts are associated with construction activities that may be implemented are of relatively short duration and impacts of brine or effluent to the Ocean. These types of impacts are independent of the pace of implementation and would be mitigated at the project level. Nor is it foreseeable that the increased pace will result in implementation of alternative means of compliance because there are a limited number of methods to reduce chloride loading and the impacts are independent of the pace of implementation. Beneficiaries of this action to revise the TMDL Implementation Schedule include users of the Santa Clara River and underlying groundwater for agricultural supply and domestic uses. Additional benefits include maintenance of existing habitat-related beneficial uses.

Name of the Public Agency Approving Activity: California Regional Water Quality Control Board Los Angeles Region

Name of the Public Agency Carrying Out Activity: California Regional Water Quality Control Board Los Angeles Region

Exempt Status:

Exemption: 14 Cal. Code Regs, sections 15378 (Project) and 15382 (Significant Effect on the Environment)

Reason why activity is exempt: This activity revises the schedule of a TMDL Implementation Plan for which the environmental effects were previously analyzed. The TMDL for chloride in



the Upper Santa Clara River has been approved as an amendment to the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan and is presently in effect. This activity is not a “project” as defined in section 15378 of title 14 of the California Code of Regulations because it has no reasonably foreseeable potential to result in any additional alterations to the physical environment. Consequently, it has no reasonably foreseeable potential to have a significant adverse change on the environment, as defined in section 15382.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Dr. Yanjie Chu 213-576-6681

Signature: **Date:** **Title:** Executive Officer

